



Washington State Department of Agriculture

PO Box 42560
Olympia, Washington 98504-2560
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Contact: [Hector Castro](#) (360) 902-1815

Avian flu quarantine lifted in Benton, Franklin counties

OLYMPIA – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) today lifted a quarantine that had been in place in parts of Benton and Franklin counties, 21 days after an emergency rule was adopted to enact the quarantine and restrict the movement of eggs, poultry or poultry products in the zone.

WSDA has determined that the avian influenza detected in the two Benton County backyard flocks in December does not appear to have spread beyond those two sites. To reach this conclusion, a team of veterinarians with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and WSDA visited approximately 1,800 premises in the quarantine area and tested samples from birds at more than 70 locations. All samples tested negative for avian influenza.

As a result of this action and lifting of the quarantine, there are no longer restrictions on the movement of poultry or poultry products within the areas of Benton or Franklin counties.

Such restrictions remain in place in parts of Clallam County, where a second quarantine was established after a flock was confirmed infected with the H5N2 avian influenza virus on Jan. 16, 2015. Visit www.agr.wa.gov/LawsRules/Rulemaking for the complete rule and a map of the Clallam County quarantine zone.

None of the viruses detected in Washington have been associated with human illnesses and there is no immediate public health concern. However, public health officials have contacted owners of identified infected flocks as a precaution.

The virus has not been detected in any commercial poultry operations in Washington. The state's commercial poultry industry has a robust avian influenza testing program and WSDA conducts weekly surveillance testing and health inspections at live bird markets in the state.

Although the quarantine has been lifted, the risk of exposure to avian influenza still remains. Because migratory wild waterfowl populations can carry the disease, particularly the highly-pathogenic strains of avian influenza, WSDA urges bird owners to protect their domestic birds from contact with wild waterfowl and remain vigilant in their biosecurity measures.

Avian influenza does not affect poultry meat or egg products, which remain safe to eat. As always, both wild and domestic poultry should be properly cooked.

Deaths or illness among domestic birds should be reported to the [WSDA Avian Health Program](#) at 1-800-606-3056. For wild birds, contact [the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) at 1-800-606-8768.